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ACR 2 (Hall)

Management of Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital

FACT SHEET

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ISSUE

For over 35 years, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital in the Watts/Willowbrook area of South Los Angeles County provided trauma care services, surgery, hospitalization and birthing services to the 1.6 million people that live and work in or around South Los Angeles. In an area with a history of violence and poverty, Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital had been the only Tier One Trauma center in one of the United States' most dense, urban, and undeserved areas. After several high profile and extensively reported incidents regarding patient health and safety issues, Martin Luther king, Jr. Hospital was closed in August 2007. As a consequence:

- The 1.6 million inhabitants of "Service Planning Area" 6 of Los Angeles County, the poorest and most underserved are in the State of California, have been without access to a Tier 1 trauma center or a public hospital in their area.
- Nine hospitals in the area have been considerably "impacted", resulting in an increase in the number of patients they see. As an example, St Francis Medical center, the only private hospital in SPA 6, has added 14 beds to its emergency room and seen an increase of approximately 25 more patients a day. In addition, its intensive care unit, which previously housed about 26 patients on any given day; now houses roughly 33 patients.
- The transportation time for critically wounded patients in the area has increased, resulting in seriously injured people having to be transported to other locations 10-15 miles away.

Because of this, SPA 6 is in urgent need for a public teaching hospital that would train medical doctors and other health professionals to work locally.

SOLUTION

Because the five university of California medical schools have had success in administering public hospitals in San Francisco, Sacramento, Torrance, Irvine, and San Diego, ACR 2 would urge the University of California to expedite negotiations with the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County and the Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science to discuss the future management of Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital in the Watts/Willowbrook area of South Los Angeles County.

Further, ACR 2 is an important step towards getting stakeholders engaged, getting decision makers prepared to act, and getting Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital open in order to care for the fundamental healthcare needs of the residents throughout South Los Angeles.

SUPPORT

Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science

American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO